

DNREC's First State Heritage Park First Saturday focuses on women's history for March

Visitors to the John Bell House can participate in "Whatever Shall I Wear?"

and learn the hidden meanings behind clothing worn in the 18th century.

DOVER –DNREC's First State Heritage Park will explore the stories and contributions of Delaware women March 2 for the park's monthly "First Saturday in the First State" program. The day's schedule will feature a variety of free events and activities marking Women's History Month, with the focus on how women have changed the state in many different ways.

Women were a powerful force in Delaware long before they had the right to vote. Many women have been political leaders, social figures and innkeepers throughout the history of The Green, the historical area of Old Dover near the State House dating from colonial times. Visitors will learn about the lives and contributions of these oft-forgotten figures in the "Women of The Green" Walking Tour, leaving from the John Bell House on the hour, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Women have also been leaders in driving political and entertainment fashions as well as design and activism. "Whatever Shall I Wear?", presented at the John Bell House from 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. on the half hour, addresses how clothing speaks volumes about a woman's station in life, as well as how she related to the world around her by what she wore. At the Johnson Victrola Museum, 78-rpm recordings of the "The Female Artists of Victor" will be incorporated into guided tours.

At Legislative Hall, guided tours will feature the many women

who have worked and served in the state capital both past and present. This program will incorporate portraits as well as other information about Delaware's female legislators.

Here is a complete list of programs and activities for First Saturday in the First State:

First Saturday – March 2

9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

- **Whatever Shall I Wear?**

John Bell House on The Green, 43 The Green

Find out how the clothes that women of Delaware wore expressed their values, classes, and personalities, and explore the meanings behind fashion choices.

- **Legislative Ladies**

Legislative Hall, 411 Legislative Avenue

Tour Delaware's State Capitol building, experience Delaware history and find out more about the women who have served in Delaware offices. Photo ID is required for all adults entering the building.

- **Biggs Kids: Baskets**

Biggs Museum of American Art, 406 Federal Street

Baskets can be made and used in all different ways. Come and make a basket that reflects your personal style. For ages 5-10.

- **The Female Artists of Victor**

Johnson Victrola Museum, 275 South New Street

Guided tours will highlight the female artists who recorded for the Victor Talking Machine Company, accompanied by 78-rpm recordings played on authentic talking machines.

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

- **Tours of the Governor's House**

At Woodburn – The Governor's House, 151 Kings Highway

Enjoy guided tours of the official residence of Delaware's

Governor since 1965, with a special focus on the First Ladies of the First State.

10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

• Women of The Green Walking Tour

Meet at the John Bell House on The Green, 43 The Green

Many women were innkeepers, political leaders and social figures throughout the history of The Green. Learn about the lives and contributions of these often forgotten figures. Tours begin on the hour.

10:30 a.m.

• The Forgotten Women of the Lincoln Assassination

Delaware Public Archives, 121 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

Kathryn Canavan, author of "Lincoln's Final Hours," will provide a preview of her new work about the women whose lives were upended in the split second when John Booth killed President Lincoln.

1 p.m.

• The Fashionable Bad Girls of Delaware

The Old State House, 25 The Green

This program will discuss several stories of infamous women in Delaware's history.

1:30 – 4 p.m.

• The Once and Future Courthouse

Kent County Courthouse, 38 The Green, Courtroom #1

From the 1690s to the present, learn how this site went from a courthouse to a hotel and back again.

Admission to all park sites and programs is free. Centrally-located free parking is available at the First State Heritage Park Welcome Center and Galleries, located at 121 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard North. For more information about "First Saturday" events and all First State Heritage Park programs, please call 302-739-9194 or visit

www.destateparks.com/heritagepark.

The First State Heritage Park is Delaware's first urban "park without boundaries," linking historic and cultural sites in the city that has been the seat of state government since 1777. The park is a partnership of state agencies under the leadership of DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation, working in collaboration with city and county government, nonprofit organizations and the private sector.

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